

PI 34 - Wisconsin's New Teacher Licensure

A new teacher licensure process is being implemented in Wisconsin as of July 31, 2004. The new process:

- Increases teacher professional development opportunities.
- Sets up a locally controlled process to manage the certification process that puts the teachers in charge of their own skill development.
- Assists teachers in creating a self-improvement program that will benefit them and their students.

Three major changes accompany the new licensing rules:

1. Teacher preparation moves from a course and credit orientation to a performance and competency orientation in the 10 Wisconsin Teacher Standards.
2. License renewal will have a career-long focus of self-directed, planned professional development that is guided by the 10 Wisconsin Teacher Standards.
3. License levels or categories will be broader in that they will be based on students' developmental levels: early childhood, middle childhood, early adolescence, and adolescence.

Ten Wisconsin Teacher Standards:

The ten standards are designed to be a guide for professional development work. The standards identify the components and define the qualities of best professional practice. Teachers need to demonstrate proficient performance in the **knowledge, skills and dispositions** under all of the following standards:

1. *Teachers know the subjects they are teaching.*
2. *Teachers know how children grow.*
3. *Teachers understand that children learn differently.*
4. *Teachers know how to teach.*
5. *Teachers know how to manage a classroom.*
6. *Teachers communicate well.*
7. *Teachers are able to plan different kinds of lessons.*
8. *Teachers know how to test for student progress.*
9. *Teachers are able to evaluate themselves.*
10. *Teachers are connected with other teachers and the community.*

PI 34 creates three levels of licenses (initial, professional and master educator):

Initial Educator - During the first three to five years of holding an Initial Educator license, a beginning educator will design and complete a personal professional development plan relating to 2 or more of the teacher standards. A three-person Professional Development Team (peer, administrator, and a Higher Ed. representative) will review and verify successful completion of this plan.

The rules require that school districts/agencies provide initial educators with ongoing orientation, support seminars that reflect the ten teacher standards, a qualified and trained mentor, and assistance in developing their first professional development plan.

The key component of the initial educator license stage is the assignment of a mentor who will volunteer for the assignment and receive training for the role. The mentor will be a professional colleague who is not in the evaluative role. Mentors will be a resource for the beginning educator to observe, confer, and provide advice and assistance in the design and implementation of the professional development plan.

After successfully moving through the Initial Educator stage and meeting goals in their professional development plan, educators would be able to renew their license as a Professional Educator.

Professional Educator License - This license will be a five-year, renewable license. To renew a license, the professional educator must design a professional development plan (PDP) relating to at least 2 of the teacher standards. The Professional Development Team (made up of three licensed teachers) will review and verify the PDP.

Teachers who currently hold renewable licenses have the option of staying in the old 6-credit system to renew their license or renew with a PDP. In addition, they have the option to switch back and forth from the new system to the old system to renew their license.

Master Educator License - The master educator license is a voluntary license that will be accessible to individuals who hold a professional educator license and who submit a portfolio of authentic work for review by a 3-person team.

Professional Development Plan

A professional Development Plan demonstrates increased proficiency in the applicable teaching standards. Teachers' personal professional development plans will reference two or more standards as the focus for professional development work. The plan includes the following components:

1. Professional self-reflection.
2. Goals and objectives addressing 2 or more of the teacher standards
3. Timeline for achieving goals with annual review
4. Collaboration with peers
5. Activities related to goals and applied to classroom or learning community
6. Evidence of impact on student learning

For a complete set of rules, resources and guidance see:

DPI Teacher Education, Professional Development and Licensing Team website at <http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/dlsis/tel/index.html> or 2). Wisconsin Education Association website at www.weac.org/Resource/licenpg.htm

